Prayer and Praise

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 February 2020

Preacher: Shawn Woo

[0:00] So, Psalm 119, verses 169 to 176. Let your hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen your precepts.

I long for your salvation, O Lord, and your law is my delight. Let my soul live and praise you, and let your rules help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep.
Seek your servant, for I do not forget your commandments. So, our quest or our journey in this epic psalm comes to an end tonight.
And it's a fitting conclusion to the psalm because it's full of just prayer and praise to God, according to His Word. And really the main point is that those who remember God's Word kind of, I guess, bubble over with praise and prayer to God.
That we, people who marinate in God's Word will kind of pulsate with prayer and praise to God. And really, if we take away anything from Psalm 119, I really hope you guys take away just the importance of meditating on God's Word is to prayer.
[1:40] And just letting your prayers be driven by and informed by Scripture, but also just to pray the Scriptures itself. Because I think when we're doing that, it's God's Word makes us more attentive in our prayer.

And also, it makes our prayer more substantive instead of just kind of repeating these kind of vague, hackneyed phrases that we've accumulated through all of our years of being a Christian and hearing other people pray.
We get to pray in accordance with God's will and His Word. So the verses 169 and 170 begin with prayer to God. It says, So there are a couple of phrases that are just repeating in those two verses. The first one is, So that's an example of poetic personification. The psalmist is speaking of his prayer like it's an actual person that's going and appearing before the presence of God in his throne room.
So it's cry coming before God. His plea coming before God. And you probably experience this where if you're on a phone call with somebody and then you keep talking and then you realize you don't hear anything back.
[3:06] You don't hear any response. And then you say hello, hello to make sure somebody's still on the other side of the line that just happened or something. Yeah. And then because you lost connection.

And then obviously when you realize that there's no one on the line, you hang up, right? And you don't keep talking. And I think sometimes Christians think about prayer the same way. They don't have faith that God actually hears.
They don't have faith that God actually answers. And when you lose that faith, you stop praying. Because what's the point? Like who keeps talking on the phone when you know that there's no one else on the end of the line? But so this is a really helpful way.
In contrast to that, to think about prayer, is that when we pray, it's like prayer like an ambassador or a person, an emissary that goes before the king actually appears before the face of God.
That when we pray, we approach the very throne room of God. And that God hears and that God answers. It reminds me of Hebrews chapter 4, verses 14 to 16.
[4:06] Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens. Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Because Christ is there in the throne of God as our intercessor.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 03:31:43

When we pray in his name, we are in his presence. We have his audience. It's like, I don't know, can you imagine going to the White House?
All the steps that you would take to prepare yourself, the way you dress, what you do. But we're going to the very throne room of God when we pray. And it's holy ground wherever we're kneeling to pray.
And these prayers that he prays are not just a list of the psalmist's own personal desires. Twice, again, there's another phrase that he repeats in those two verses, and that's according to your word.
[5:15] Give me understanding according to your word. Deliver me according to your word. So he wants his thinking and understanding to be conformed to God's word.

He doesn't want God's will to be conformed to his thinking and understanding. And when the psalmist says he asks God to pray, when he asks God to deliver him according to his word, he's not asking that God would deliver him and make his situation better according to his own liking, but that according to his word he would deliver him.
And so this is, again, it's something that's been coming up again and again through Psalm 119, the importance of seeking God on the basis of his word according to his will.
That's what 1 John 5, 14, 15 talks about. If we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the request that we have asked of him.
So it's a really simple but powerful idea that when we pray in accordance with his word, that God answers our prayers. I brought a little, a short article.
[6:25] If you guys only have a few copies of it because I had to rush out to get a email from the bus stop, so I couldn't wait for it to finish printing.

But it's two, 12 reasons you should pray scripture. So I encourage you guys, if you want to take it with you and read it, to do so. And then after those two prayers in verses 169 and 170, he follows it up with two praises that he anticipates he will do when God answers his prayers.
So it says, My lips will pour forth praise, for you teach me your statutes. My tongue will sing of your word, for all your commandments are right.
So God's word, kind of meditating on God's word, not only produces prayer, but also produces praise. And he's very effusive in his description.
He says, My lips will pour forth praise, literally flow with praise or bubble over with praise. It's very descriptive, right? And then similarly, he doesn't say, My tongue will speak of your word.
[7:34] He says, My tongue will sing of your word. And that when God teaches him his statutes, the psalmist will praise God and sing of his word, for all of his commandments are right.

It is right in the sense that it is correct, but also right in the sense that it is righteous, not evil or wrong. And then in verses 173, 176, psalmist resumes his prayer.
And here he asks God to deliver him from whatever predicament it is that he's facing, because he keeps God's word, since he keeps God's word. It says, It's because God promises to deliver those who belong to him and trust in his word.
He's praying to him, Lord, I do trust in your word. I do keep your word, so please deliver me. And of course, this is fulfilled ultimately in Christ.
In Exodus, not Exodus, Ezekiel chapter 34, God promises of a day when, and he will himself come as the shepherd of God's people to gather those who have been scattered.
[8:57] And then that's fulfilled, of course, when Jesus comes and says in John 10, I am the good shepherd. And we see him describe himself and his ministry, comparing it in Luke 15 to a shepherd that goes to seek after the one lost sheep, right?

And so that's kind of what we see anticipated here in the psalm. The psalmist sees himself as a sheep that has gone astray, not in the sense of just morally going astray from keeping his word, but someone that is lost in a predicament, some needing deliverance.
And we are all in that state because we have all strayed from God. We have all been in a great danger in predicament because of our slavery to death, our condemnation under the law.
And it's Christ who comes to seek us, who are lost, to save us. And he does that by giving his life up to die on the cross for us, to take our place on the cross, to raise us from our hopeless state, raise us from the dead.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 03:31:43

And so this psalm, the entire psalm, not just this stanza, is fulfilled in Christ, our good shepherd, our savior. And it's by hoping in the word of Christ, the gospel of Jesus Christ, that we have confidence, like this psalmist has, that God will ultimately come to our deliverance, that we will ultimately be saved and redeemed in the end, and that all our cries and pleas prayers will be answered by him when we pray in accordance with the word of Christ.
[10:43] Dad, let's sing a song and pray.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host - 2026-09-16 03:31:43